**WESTERN PRAIRIE HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING**

**March 1, 2024**

The meeting of the Joint Powers Board for Western Prairie Human Services was held March 1, 2024 at the Western Prairie Human Services Office in Glenwood office.

**MEMBERS PRESENT OTHERS PRESENT MEMBERS ABSENT**

Doyle Sperr Stacy Hennen, Director Dwight Walvatne

Paul Gremmels Kari Rude, Deputy Director/HR Director

Troy Johnson Chris Schmitz, Executive Assistant

Ken Johnson Tracy Bowman, Fiscal Supervisor

Paul Gerde Crystal Zaviska, Financial Assistance Supervisor

Paul Wildman Dwight Nelson, Traverse County Commissioner

Larry Lindor Kayla Schmidt, Traverse County Commissioner

Dwight Walvatne Phyllis Reller, Social Service Supervisor

Bill LaValley Diane Kittelson, Senior Coordinator

Gordy Wagner Krisie Barron, Lutheran Social Service Human Specialist

**A. Opening:**

1. Chair Troy Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

3. Introduction of new staff. None at this time.

4. Approval of the February 2, 2023 meeting minutes. After reviewing the minutes, Commissioner Gerde made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU.

5. A summary of the February 2024 bills was presented by the director. After discussion, Commissioner Wildman made a motion to approve the bills, seconded by Commissioner Lindor MCU.

6. The fiscal supervisor reviewed January 2024 financial information. After questions, Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the financial reports, seconded by Commissioner Sperr, MCU.

**B. CONTRACTS/AGREEMENTS**

7. **Prime West Targeted Case Management Addendum**

The director discussed the 2024 amendment to our behavioral health participation agreement with Prime West. The service they pay for and contract for is adult and children’s mental health targeted case management. While our State medical assistance rates are set in June and run from July 1 to June 30 of every year, Prime West does our rates on a calendar year basis, so it works better with the county budget cycle. Western Prairie Human Services Adult Mental Health Targeted Case Management rates for 2024 are $565 per client per month based on a face to face contact. Western Prairie Human Services Children’s Mental Health Targeted Case Management rates for 2024 per client per month are $1,574 per client per month for face to face contact. The State set children’s rate went up from the 2023 rate of $1,436, so $138 more per client per month. The Adult rate went down from $962 to $565. Western Prairie Human Services has more children’ clients than adults, and we were aware of this decrease before we completed our 2024 budget, so it has been budgeted for. After review and discussion, Commissioner Gremmels made a motion to approve the contract, seconded by Commissioner Wildman, MCU

8. **Collaborative Safety Training**

The director reviewed with the board a previously approved $45,000 contract in 2022 with Collaborative Safety to do an in-person introduction and education of what Collaborative Safety is and then leadership labs for the management team and lead workers. Western Prairie Human Services just completed the leadership labs in January of 2024. We have utilized collaborative safety to define and establish our culture at WPHS. We continue to work on establishing culture and continuing to embed that culture in our agency. When we did a staff satisfaction survey one of the things that came out of it in several areas was a desire to learn more and further embed this into our culture and also to engage our partners in the community. Western Prairie Human Services staff would like to be working off the same page in terms of philosophy and develop closer partnerships with our community partners like schools, public health, law enforcement, and county attorneys for example. A large part of the cost is having the Collaborative Safety coming back in person. It would be a space to meet with our partners and work our way through difficult cases or conversations and bring our practice more in line together and create teams and teamwork within each unit. After review and discussion, Commissioner Gerde made a motion to approve the contract, seconded by Commissioner Lindor, MCU

9. **Divine House**

The director discussed the Divine House Contract. This contract is for Semi Independent Living a service for persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities who do not require a 24-hour plan of care (Waiver). This service provides support in their areas of need that allow them to live more independently. The average number of hours authorized per person ranges from 2 to 6 hours per week. At this time, we only have 2 people utilizing this service at Western Prairie Human Services. In the past we utilized the Kandiyohi host county contract but they do not have a contract anymore. The director is asking the board to approve an $38.00 per hour for the services. After review and discussion, Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the contract, seconded by Commissioner Sperr, MCU

**C. OLD BUSINESS**

10. **Out of Home Placement List**

The director reviewed the out of home placement list for the month of January we have 2 more children in placement than in December, 5 children went into placement in February and 2 children left care with a relative transfer of custody. January was extremely busy in child protection unit and the case counts remain high. Western Prairie Human Services has two kids in 18-21 placement, both age 19. Western Prairie Human Services have four kids in waivered care, two of whom will turn 18 in the next 2-3 months and will move into the adult system. There are seven in the process of permanency and there are four working towards reunification. Western Prairie Human Services has one child in our mental health unit who will be turning 18 soon. Western Prairie Human Services has three children moving towards reunification. With the higher caseloads we are working on what additional support we can provide to our staff. The union did agree to the temporary change in administrative time banks that was approved last month to help support our staff.

11. **Case Counts**

The director discussed the current case counts. Our intakes are extremely high in child welfare/child protection. Western Prairie Human Service had 105 intakes in January, it is higher than our highest month in 2023, which was 94 in March of 2023. December was also high with 82 but we average in the 60’s, maybe low 70’s so our volume is up quite a bit. Western Prairie Human Services total social service cases are 667 which is higher than any month in 2023. If you look at all cases we are a bit high in disabilities, down in adult protection intakes but the same as December in adult protection cases. From January 2023 to January 2024 we are up 10 adult mental health cases. It has been a very busy January on the Social Services side. According to our data we are seeing typical reductions and increases. The director discussed that the Food Support program (SNAP) is down 13 cases, and Health Care increased 5 cases. The 5 health care cases were late renewals that were previously closed in Health Care and are now re-opened. Child support cases reduced to 7 cases. In December 13 new programs were added. Ten residence have reapplied for a program.

12. **Personnel/Hiring update**

The deputy director discussed that the agency has several openings. Western Prairie Human Services has two Social Worker position open, one in our child protection unit and one in our disability’s unit. Western Prairie Human Services also has a Social Services Supervisor position open due to retirement along with a Visitation Aide position open. There is an amendment to the David Drone Contract. After review and discussion, Commissioner Wildman made a motion to approve the amended contract, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, MCU

**D.** **New Business:**

13. **Live Well at Home & Prime West Update**

The director discussed Live Well at Home Grant that needs to be expended by March 31, 2024. This grant is to support caregiver programming aimed at providing information and relief to caregivers of seniors. This is moving along with the kick off programs scheduled. This also will feed into the training coming with the Prime West grant. In 2023 Western Prairie and Traverse county received a grant from Prime West that will target the recruitment, training and retention of Homemaker and Chore Services in the three counties. Trainings will be offered to community partners.

14. **Case Works Hosting Letter and BAA**

The director discussed with the board a Case Works letter. Caseworks, which is owned by Next Chapter Technology (NCT), is our Electronic Document Management System (EDMS). All of the data for Western Prairie’s EDMS is currently stored on a server in Clay County and we pay them $8,000 a year to host our data. All of the Case Works counties are either hosted at Clay or Kandiyohi County. Clay County recently had a data cyber security incident and some of our data was taken in that process. Clay County has made the decision not to host data for anyone at this time because of the risk involved and has given us notice to that effect for 12/31/2024. The director is informing the board of that while Western Prairie Human Services words with NCT to consider all of our options. NCT is likely going to host their own data and charge Western Prairie Human Services for that in addition to the annual maintenance charge that we pay. NCT have been in contact with our IT contractor, Shawn Larsen, and he will be working with them on a solution. Once we have a solution and a cost associated with it the director will bring it back to the board for review and any approval that may be necessary.

15. **Resolution of Support**

The director discussed the Minnesota State Legislature has approved additional beds for Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) beds in Minnesota to add to our current capacity of 166. Minnesota added this service to our MN Center for Medicaid (CMS) approved services, so it is 100% Medical Assistance (MA) reimbursable. A PRTF is intended to be a service that meets the gap of needed services in MN for a child with mental health or developmental disabilities with needs that are too high for a Rule 5 residential center but not high enough for in patient hospitalization. It is a longer-term residential service that meets high psychiatric needs. MN has struggled to find providers willing to provide this service, Western Prairie Human Services does not have one located within a reasonable distance to our region. Clay County has partnered with Solutions Behavioral Health in Moorhead to apply for a bond to purchase land and build a PRTF in Clay County and they are looking for our support from our region in this process. The need for beds is substantial, we just waited in one of our counties for over 9 months for a bed and an informal survey of our region found 27 kids who need this level of service and we cannot access it. Having a location closer to us is also helpful for our staff and the families in terms of visiting and participating in their treatment and assisting in planning for discharge. After review and discussion, Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Gerde. MCU

16. **State and Federal Fiscal Monitoring Policy**

The fiscal supervisor proposed two polices at the auditors requested for Western Prairie Human Services. A subcontractor monitoring policy and subrecipient policy. After review and discussion, Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the subcontractor policy, seconded by Commissioner LaValley. Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve the subrecipient policy, seconded by Commissioner Wagner. MCU

17. **Data Retention Policy**

The fiscal supervisor discussed a data retention policy which Western Prairie Human Services Record Retention policy will follow County Human Services General Records Retention Schedule as updated and issued by the Minnesota Department of Human Services in the most recent bulletin, current bulletin number is 22-85-02 After review and discussion, Commissioner Wildman made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Gerde. MCU

18. **Credit Card Policy**

The fiscal supervisor requested permission to use discretion to temporarily increase credit card limits for the staff when we are purchasing things for a grant or if we place children and need to purchase things. The limit for staff is $1,000 and for management it’s $3,000. After review and discussion, Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Sperr. MCU

19. **BAA Agreements**

The director discussed the need for a contract with Traverse County and Region IV South having a Business Associate Agreement (BAA) in place with entities that we share data back and forth with so there are clear boundaries and guidelines in place if a breach occurs and guidelines in place for how to use data. Attached are BAA’s with Traverse County and Region IV South. The director would request that the board approve this format for BAA’s and approve that the director can sign them on behalf of Western Prairie Human Services for entities we work closely with. After review, Commissioner Gremmels made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner LaValley, MCU

20. **Personal Safety and Security Guidelines**

The deputy director discussed with the board a Personal Safety and Security Policy for Western Prairie Human Services staff. The deputy director will have a handbook for commissioners next meeting. After review and discussion, Commissioner K Johnson made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Wildman. MCU

21. **Region IV South Payroll**

The fiscal supervisor discussed that Western Prairie Human Services is the fiscal host for Region IV South. Region IV South is switching from using CPT/Grant County Auditor to Bergankdv as their new payroll vendor. The director is asking the board to approve and to allow funds to be withdrawn from Western Prairie Human Services payroll account. After review and discussion, Commissioner Lindor made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Wildman MCU

22. **2022 Fiscal Annual Report**

The fiscal supervisor discussed the 2022 annual report for fiscal. WPHS, collectively as a board, management, and staff, did a lot of work to get us where we are, and we feel like overall we are in a good place. WPHS are serving people well, starting to engage more in the communities, building ties, and building partnerships within each county. WPHS staff have done a fantastic job and the board has been supportive and helpful the whole way. The director noted that in the merger fiscal was unique in that they could not do a lot of things until after January 1, 2022 and we had a lot of staffing challenges and turnover. The director wanted the give credit to the current fiscal manager for the incredible work she has done to clean up duplicate codes, set up processes, learn payroll duties, auditor duties, and treasurer duties. She has done a tremendous job and her unit has as well.

23. **Overview of WPHS Joint Powers Agreement (JPA)**

The director is asking the board to review the Joint Powers Agreement with adding a new county added and fiscal formula. The JPA reads as follows, the board consist of; with two counties it is all 5 commissioners from each county, with 3 counties it is 3 representatives from each county, with 4 counties 2 representatives. The fiscal formula reads as, the funding formula used should be updated annually by November of each year, the preliminary and final budget requires 2 of 3 commissioner approval. It does not appear to require more than a majority to accept a county into Western Prairie Human Services, joining is contingent upon that county meeting the initial contribution required by Western Prairie Human Services.

**Report from Board Appointments:**

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Troy

Johnson at 11:31 a.m.

A. Lakeland Mental Health Center………………. K. Johnson/Gerde

B. Horizon Community Health Board……………. Sperr/Walvatne/Lindor/Wagner

C. Prime West Health CBP……………………………... Wagner/K Johnson/T. Johnson/Lindor

D. West Central Communities Action, Inc. ………... K Johnson/Lindor

E. Agency on Aging…………………………………… Lindor/LaValley

F. Child Protection Pre-Placement………………. T. Johnson/Gremmels

G. Rainbow Rider ……………………………………… LaValley/Walvatne/Gerde/

H. R4S Governing and Executive Board…………… K. Johnson/Wildman

I. Child and Youth Council……………………………. Sperr/Wagner

J. WPHS Personnel Committee……………………… Lindor/Wildman/Sperr/T. Johnson

K. WPHS Executive Committee………………………. T. Johnson/Walvatne/Gremmels

l. WPHS Finance Committee………………………... Gerde/Lindor/LaValley/K. Johnson

M. WPHS Safety Committee…………………………………... Sperr/Wildman

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Board Chair Board Secretary